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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/681,751	10/09/2003	Nicholas Haan	66347-097	8133

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EXAMINER

FORMAN, BETTY J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1634

DATE MAILED: 08/17/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/681,751

Applicant(s)

HAAN, NICHOLAS

Examiner

BJ Forman

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 May 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-35 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 23-35 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☒ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Group II, Claims 22-33 in papers filed 30 May 2006 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the grounds that because the subject matter of the two groups are so closely related, it would be necessary to search classification of both groups to conduct an adequate search. However, it is maintained that undue burden would be required to examine the claims of group I along with claims of group II as evidenced by the fact that the claims of groups I and II have acquired a separate status in the art as recognized by their different classifications as recognized by their divergent subject matter and because a search of the subject matter of invention I is not co-extensive with a search of invention II. For example a search of the subject matter for group I would encompass method steps of hybridization, detection and analysis not encompassed by the subject matter of group II and a search of the subject matter for group II would encompass structural elements (e.g. computer, processor, detector) not encompassed by the subject matter for group I. Therefore the search is not co-extensive. Furthermore, as stated in the Restriction Requirement, Process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the patentable product will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier. Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 1-21 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 22-35 are under prosecution.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 26 and 28 are objected to because of the following informalities:

The word "probe" is misspelled "robe", in line 3 of the claim.

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The word "hybridization" is misspelled "hybridication" in line 2 of the claim.

Appropriate correction is required.

3. Claims 23-35 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Claims 23-25 and 32-33 are drawn to the data or information received by the receiving means of Claim 22. Claims 26-31 and 34-35 are drawn to the means for modeling of Claim 22 and define an intended use for the modeling means e.g. to define sub-models. The data does not further define any structural component of the apparatus of Claim 22. The modeling means, as defined in the specification, comprises data structures, mathematical algorithms and data manipulation. The means do not result in any functional or structural interrelationship or produce a concrete, tangible and useful result. Therefore, the means do not further limit the apparatus of Claim 22.

ii) Computer-Related Processes Limited to a Practical Application in the Technological Arts

There is always some form of physical transformation within a computer because a computer acts on signals and transforms them during its operation and changes the state of its components during the execution of a process. Even though such a physical transformation occurs within a computer, such activity is not determinative of whether the process is statutory because such transformation alone does not distinguish a statutory computer process from a nonstatutory computer process. What is determinative is not how the computer performs the process, but what the computer does to achieve a practical application. See *Arrhythmia*, 958 F.2d at 1057, 22 USPQ2d at 1036.

A process that merely manipulates an abstract idea or performs a purely mathematical algorithm is nonstatutory despite the fact that it might inherently have some usefulness. In *Sarkar*, 588 F.2d at 1335, 200 USPQ at 139, the court explained why this approach must be followed:

No mathematical equation can be used, as a practical matter, without establishing and substituting values for the variables expressed therein. Substitution of values dictated by the formula has thus been viewed as a form of mathematical step. If the steps of gathering and substituting values were alone sufficient, every mathematical equation, formula, or algorithm having any

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practical use would be per se subject to patenting as a "process" under 101. Consideration of whether the substitution of specific values is enough to convert the disembodied ideas present in the formula into an embodiment of those ideas, or into an application of the formula, is foreclosed by the current state of the law.

For such subject matter to be statutory, the claimed process must be limited to a practical application of the abstract idea or mathematical algorithm in the technological arts. See *Alappat*, 33 F.3d at 1543, 31 USPQ2d at 1556-57 (quoting *Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. at 192, 209 USPQ at 10). See also *Alappat* 33 F.3d at 1569, 31 USPQ2d at 1578-79 (Newman, J., concurring) ("unpatentability of the principle does not defeat patentability of its practical applications") (citing *O'Reilly v. Morse*, 56 U.S. (15 How.) at 114-19). A claim is limited to a practical application when the method, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result; i.e., the method recites a step or act of producing something that is concrete, tangible and useful. See *AT &T*, 172 F.3d at 1358, 50 USPQ2d at 1452. Likewise, a machine claim is statutory when the machine, as claimed, produces a concrete, tangible and useful result (as in *State Street*, 149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1601) and/or when a specific machine is being claimed (as in *Alappat*, 33 F.3d at 1544, 31 USPQ2d at 1557 (*> en< banc). For example, **a computer process that simply calculates a mathematical algorithm that models noise is nonstatutory**. However, a claimed process for digitally filtering noise employing the mathematical algorithm is statutory. (MPEP, 2106 IV, 2, ii).

35 USC § 112, sixth paragraph

4. The claims are written in means-plus-function language. The MPEP § 2106, II, C provides guidance in claim interpretation.

Where means plus function language is used to define the characteristics of a machine or manufacture invention, claim limitations must be interpreted to read on only the structures or materials disclosed in the specification and "equivalents thereof." (Two en banc decisions of the Federal Circuit have made clear that the Office is to interpret means plus function language according to 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. In the first, *In re Donaldson*, 16 F.3d 1189, 1193, 29 USPQ2d 1845, 1848 (Fed. Cir. 1994), the court held:

The plain and unambiguous meaning of paragraph six is that one construing means-plus-function language in a claim must look to the specification and interpret that language in light of the corresponding structure, material, or acts described therein, and equivalents thereof, to the extent that the specification provides such disclosure. Paragraph six does not state or even suggest that the PTO is exempt from this mandate, and there is no legislative history indicating that Congress intended that the PTO should be. Thus, this court must accept the plain and precise language of paragraph six.

5. The instant specification broadly defines the claimed means at (page 5, line 31-page 6, line 16) such that the means for receiving data encompasses a device for receiving a data

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image, the means for modeling and means for comparing are processor configured for receiving and analyzing the received data and the means for outputting the information as a display or data recorder.

As stated above, the type of data and/or information received and/or used along with the use of the modeling means do not further define the means for receiving, means for modeling and means for comparing.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

7. Claims 22-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stoughton et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,132,969, issued 17 October 2000).

Regarding Claims 22-35, Stoughton et al disclose an apparatus for analyzing microarray images (Abstract), the apparatus comprising means for receiving data from a microarray from a DNA microarray having gene expression information (e.g. multi-channel image detector, Column 50, line 40-Column 51, line 36), means for modeling the microarray (e.g. computer, programs and software configured for receiving and analyzing the received data (Column 54, line 4-Column 57, line 40), and the means for outputting the information (e.g.

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computer display and/or data recorder (Column 54, lines 20-32). Stoughton et al further disclose the apparatus comprising various algorithms for analysis of signals and data from the microarray and computer software utilizing the data for modeling parameters § 5.1-5.6).

8. Claims 22-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Friend et al (U.S. Patent No. 7,013,221, filed 28 April 2000).

Regarding Claims 22-35, Friend et al disclose an apparatus for analyzing microarray images (§ 5.2-5.3.6), the apparatus comprising means for receiving data from a microarray from a DNA microarray having gene expression information (e.g. multi-channel image detector, Column 50, line 11-Column 51, line 57), means for modeling the microarray (e.g. computer, programs and software configured for receiving and analyzing the received data (Column 41, line 44-Column 45, line 67), and the means for outputting the information (e.g. computer display and/or data recorder (Column 51, lines 24-38). Friend et al further disclose the apparatus comprising various algorithms for analysis of signals and data from the microarray and computer software utilizing the data for modeling parameters § 5.1.2).

Conclusion

9. No claim is allowed.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BJ Forman whose telephone number is (571) 272-0741. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:00 TO 3:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ram Shukla can be reached on (571) 272-0735. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (571) 273-8300.


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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

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For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.


BJ Forde, Ph.D.
Primary Examiner
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August 14, 2006